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ABSTRACT

This publication describes six Framing the Future (FTF) staff development projects that use work-based learning with different project teams and learning activities varying from general awareness to specific skills development in Australia. "The Center for Human Services--Working for Its People" describes a project that introduced a Community Services Training Package to provide assessment opportunities dependent on students' circumstances and needs. "Chubb--Framing Its Own Future" tells how FTF found out from staff who will use the training package, what is important, and what support/resources they need to get the most out of training. "Embracing the Future: Sydney Institute of Technology" describes how FTF provided a forum to establish a dialog on how heads of studies could manage their changing roles and to plan future roles. "The Future for Children--TAFE SA Child Studies Program" discusses a project to share and promote ideas and models of how institutes work closely with industry to provide more flexible and effective training. "Seeing Food Afresh--Victorian Food Industry Training Board" focuses on introducing and implementing a training package for the seafood industry. "Sowing the Seeds for the Future: University of Ballarat SMB TAFE Campus" describes how three departments--rural, hospitality, and building studies--used FTF to provide training in a changing environment with industry as an active partner in the learning process. (YLB)

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Framing the Future

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Central TAFE WA - Centre for Human Services
Chubb Fire
Sydney Institute of Technology
TAFE SA Child Studies Program
Victorian Food Industry Training Board
The University of Ballarat SMB TAFE Campus

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What is Framing the Future?

Framing the Future is a major staff development initiative of the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA). The initiative supports people in the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector who are involved in implementing the National Training Framework (NTF).

Framing the Future is designed to promote a sustainable structure for staff development which can be implemented throughout the national VET sector. Providing relevant, timely, workbased staff development, the structure embraces national training directions and policies whilst meeting state, territory and local needs. The process of learning is transferable and useful in a range of contexts. The staff development model used in Framing the Future has the following characteristics:

- It is flexible.
  People choose the level and scope of staff development they need. There are few constraints on how, when and where they learn.
- It is empowering.
  It moves beyond simply gathering facts about the new system, to the development and application of skills and knowledge as it affects them.
- It has the potential to be self sustaining.
  It assists in the development of a workbased learning culture.

Framing the Future is designed to meet a range of emerging staff training and development needs as they are identified by people throughout the National VET sector. The major components of Framing the Future are:

- Workbased learning staff development projects
- Network communications strategy

These components are supported by:

- a range of purpose designed publications
- a marketing, information and promotion strategy

People are able to access as much or as little of what is offered, at a time which suits them.

A more detailed description of Framing the Future can be found in "Framing the Future An Approach to Staff Development" which may be ordered from the website http://www.tafe.sa.edu.au/institutes/para/ftf/

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Framing the Future - Workbased Learning Projects

Framing the Future promotes and uses workbased learning. Projects are designed to address an organisation's staff development needs at a point in time.

There are many ways of describing workbased learning. Strategies such as action learning, mentoring and coaching are all forms of workbased learning.

It is difficult to describe a 'typical' Framing the Future project. The usual ingredients include:

- an idea or issue within a workteam or organisation which needs to be resolved
- a group of people wanting to deal with this issue in their workplace
- management support for the work being undertaken by the project team
- a project facilitator who is able to guide, lead, direct the project team at the appropriate time
- industry/enterprise involvement in the project

There is no set number of participants in a Framing the Future project. The configuration is designed to meet the needs of the particular organisation and location. One project, located in a remote regional area, has 14 teams of 10 people who were able to 'meet' together using video conferencing at set times during the life of the project.

A Framing the Future project would typically run for four months. During that time the group meets as many times as is appropriate and possible. Some groups meet fortnightly, others only three times. The main reason for meeting is often to report back to the larger group on the activities carried out in the interim and to exchange ideas on what has been learned.

Participating in these projects develops a sense of ownership and can act as a catalyst for new ideas. Framing the Future projects have emphasised partnerships between enterprises, industry organisations and training providers. These partnerships have expanded the understanding of the participants and underline the need for cooperation across the VET sector to achieve the aims of the National Training Framework.

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People, Places and Projects

People, Places and Projects has been written to provide a 'real' perspective on Framing the Future projects. It can only present a sample of the 140 Framing the Future projects conducted nationally during 1997 and 1998. These examples do not say it all, but provide a snapshot of the types of projects being conducted in workplaces around Australia.

As you read the six examples presented here you will see that project teams are very different and their learning activities vary from general awareness raising to specific skills development.

If you would like to read about the other projects, a full listing is available on the Framing the Future website http://www.tafe.sa.edu.au/institutes/para/ftf/ or in the publication "Projects 98" which may be ordered from the website.

The Centre For Human Services - Working For Its People

Central TAFE WA
Centre for Human Services

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The Centre For Human Services - Working For Its People

On a busy road just east of Perth's central business district, the Mt Lawley Campus of the Central TAFE bustles with activity. In the middle of the throng, the Centre for Human Services is made up of a small cluster of buildings that surrounds an oasis of green space, benches and a picnic area. But there are changes looming, and while the physical environment will stay the same, the people inside the buildings who make up the teaching arms of the WA School of Health and Community Services are being pushed out of their academic havens, and asked to work more closely with the society they are serving. Reacting to the changing times, four areas within the Centre for Human Services - Aged Care, Disability, Youth, and Community Work - decided to take the bull by the horns and shape their direction. How? Enter: A Framing the Future Project.

The introduction of the Community Services Training Package provides opportunities to assess students in a range of ways depending on the circumstances, and the needs, of each individual student. When the Centre for Human Services began their Framing the Future Project, the first thing the team had to come to terms with was the need to change. Each team worked through what was in the new Training Package, so that everyone felt confident they had all the necessary information. By focusing on shifts in industry, government and community expectations, it became obvious why the changes are relevant, important and beneficial. This immediately built up a more enthusiastic reception for the need to change because individuals felt informed.

> *The fact that they could learn something in terms of industry, assessment tools, and teamwork was the attraction.* Jane Young, Program Manager, Centre for Human Services

Jane Young and David Rogers played the role of manager and adviser for the project. They acted as extra resources for the project teams. Any team that was stuck, or unable to find extra information, could get advice, direction or assistance without long delays or piles of paperwork. This base kept up both motivation and enthusiasm as there was never much of an opportunity to develop a 'this is all too hard' mentality.

As facilitator of all the project groups, Susan Hall established the ground rules under the guidelines of action learning. Many of the team members were already used to working together, and used the same techniques of group work with their students. However this gave staff a chance to become actively involved in developing a greater team spirit. Since the facilitator was an outsider, the project members felt it was OK to speak up if they weren't happy with the way the project was going. Then Jane Young, the Project Manager could step in to discuss the issue and help the group come up with a solution. In retrospect, the participants agree that having an outsider as facilitator help to set the tone of the project, and the meetings from the outset. 'They' were bringing in a specialist - this must be important!

> *The teams are still pulling together as we go on to work in other areas.* - Jane Young

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Jane Young and David Rogers set up the initial workshop to get everybody involved in the project focused on the methodology of Framing the Future.

> *We wanted it to be as professional as possible. ... It affected the way people looked at the project right from the very start.* Jane Young

After the workshop, the team broke into area specific work groups. Working in smaller, specialised groups helped each team concentrate on the implementation issues that directly affected them.

> *It was much easier to put forward ideas in the smaller groups - in the larger ones it can be quite intimidating.* Rosalind Corsini

When tasks or processes were given to someone 'as their baby' they were far more likely to take control and see the results through. By giving an individual responsibility, people took personal pride in the outcomes of their project group, and in the on-going development of the new assessment tools. So the personal responsibility within the group context was very effective.

> *We became a more cohesive team. It makes it easier because you are bouncing ideas off each other.* Rosalind Corsini

Each industry representative got involved in helping the staff pinpoint areas that the industry felt had been problematic in the past. And the series of meetings made or enhanced ties between the staff and people within industry.

> *I've learned more about what people expect.* Aileen O'Rourke

The individuals within Central TAFE involved in Framing the Future have been among the first to develop assessment strategies for the Training Package. As they researched the best way to carry out the assessment, project members had a great opportunity to explore how each option worked, and what skills are required. By pure osmosis - learning through doing, or knowing what skill and training was relevant, participants are now well placed within the institution to jump into the opportunities that will be created as the Training Package is implemented.

> *I really enjoyed it. We learned heaps from each other.* Lena Charlick

The process of action learning is a skill in itself. All the project members gained useful skills through their involvement that they will be able to draw on in their everyday work situation. As teaching delivery and assessment becomes more flexible, staff will need to be able to act and react with more creativity. By the time the final workshop was held, all the teams had come up with assessment strategies for their own areas, and getting together to compare notes provided a fresh vigour to the project. While it was a serious project on a serious matter, stepping outside the normal work sphere gave a different feel to the meetings. At the final workshop all the teams got together and presented their findings in a fun atmosphere. The Aged Care group did a role play that even included blue rinse.

There was a chance to celebrate when it was all over. Aileen O'Rourke

There has been a noticeable change in the work culture at the Centre for Human Services. Individuals who previously preferred to sit on the fence found they liked having their input and opinions sought. Staff are now more willing to voice their ideas and become involved in further assessment development.

We feel it lifted the staff productivity because they got involved in the sharing of ideas and information. Jane Young

We gave ourselves stringent timeframes and we worked towards them quite efficiently. We were very focused. Aileen O'Rourke

David Rogers took part in Framing the Future as a team participant and as an adviser. He thought that the project was successful because the Centre finished up with a great product, and they learned a lot on the way. The Centre for Human Services looks ready to face their future together.

When we look back, the biggest advantage was the staff development. Even though we'd been working in teams for a long time, this project focused us on teamwork more than anything else had before. Jane Young

Chubb - Framing its own Future

Chubb Fire

Chubb- Framing Its Own Future.

Change In The Air

Chubb Fire makes and maintains equipment to detect and suppress fire. Its technicians are the people responsible for servicing and repairing smoke alarms, fire extinguishers, hoses, and other fire fighting equipment. The Chubb Fire Framing the Future project involved employees who will be implementing the Enterprise Chubb Fire Training Package. Excited by the chance to introduce more flexible training in his organisation, Patrick Gavaghan, the National Training Manager for Chubb Fire, was eager to take up the opportunity to work with Framing the Future. He recognised that to implement the Chubb Fire Training Package, there must be involvement and commitment at all levels of the company. Framing the Future acted as a vehicle to find out from the staff who actually will be using the Training Package, what is important to them, and what support or resources they need to get the most out of the training.

Fitting The Frame

Action learning means learning through doing. The Chubb Fire staff involved in Framing the Future picked up new, tangible skills while they worked on the development and implementation of the Chubb Fire Training Package. Individuals researched their areas of interest, using new technology such as computers and the Internet, getting ideas and feedback from other technicians, and consulting in the wider industry. Staff working on the project gained new skills through participating in tasks outside their normal jobs.

> *Before we even got started I had to learn what was possible with our technology.* Patrick Gavaghan

As facilitator of the Framing the Future project, Patrick Gavaghan gathered a group of portable fire service technicians from all over Australia including Mackay, Perth, Adelaide, Sydney and Melbourne. Cost ruled out face to face meetings, so the group convened by phone, with participants - all technicians, spending two hours on Wednesday afternoons on a five or six person teleconference. Especially for the regional office members, being involved in a company-wide project gave them a sense of belonging.

> *If there is a representative from Queensland sent on a course or project, usually it's someone from the Brisbane office. It can feel like they forget about us up here, so it was great to be involved on this project.* Chantal Begg, Mackay

Technicians are typically kept busy in the field so this change in their role was important. As meetings progressed, people felt more confident, of both the project direction and themselves. Putting forward ideas on how to address issues, and having those ideas and suggestions treated with respect and interest, increased the participants' interest in, and willingness to take responsibility for, tasks within the project parameters, running with their own part of the project.

> *At first I didn't say much. But after a while I really got a lot out of it.* Chantal Begg, Mackay

During the meetings, talking with the same people over the weeks of the project allowed everyone to build skills in listening and discussion, in a professional environment. According to the facilitator, Patrick Gavaghan, while it was harder over the phone, than face-to face, to make sure that everyone participated, 'it was my role to encourage and support, rather than to drive the meetings'. Employees became more positive about the company when they were made to feel part of the solution, rather than bystanders observing the problems.

I feel my confidence has improved a lot. Project member

The project increased contact between staff from different offices, widening the pool of resources and consultants available to the people involved in the project - and the other staff from their offices. This informal network saved time and stress, as it was easy to call and ask for advice or assistance within the network. Sharing information meant there was less reinventing the wheel. Framing the Future projects also access support from an official resource group, which in Chubb's case included the national service manager and a state manager from Chubb, and representatives from the Australian Workers Union, and the Fire Association.

It's easier to talk to a live person - someone you've talked to before.
Chantal Begg, Mackay

Real Questions Answered At Chubb ...or How Staff Benefited...

There was a range of project outcomes.

No one understands what all the changes are about.

Glen Croft from the Sydney office suggested a newsletter that would explain the why, how, and when of the Training Package. The newsletter, *Combat* has got discussion rolling and raised questions about the Training Package, which in turn are addressed in subsequent newsletters. The newsletter was posted to all employees at their home address to ensure everyone received the same information. This included non-service staff as well as all service personnel.

Remote sites don't have their own assessors, so training is held up until an assessor can be brought in, which is expensive in both time and money.

Chantal Begg from Mackay suggested that if every site had trained assessors, training could be completed more quickly at less cost. As assessment is crucial within the Training Package, the company agreed to speed up the training of some regional staff so that every office is able to train and support its people effectively. As the Training Package provides standard qualifications there is a genuine career path available to all employees now. As soon as members of each team complete the training as it is set out, they will be able to qualify as assessors. Now regional staff will not be left out.

The ongoing commitment of the Chubb Fire management ensured that the project was allowed to continue with full support and resource allocation

Why should employees bother? It does take time and effort to undertake any training. However it will help people to do their jobs more effectively, and when a job comes up now, trained people will be available within the team, so promotions will be more likely. Qualifications gained at Chubb Fire will move with the employee if they change companies.

The On-going Learning Curve

One of the suggestions from the project team was that all new employees should be assigned a mentor. A follow-up project to help develop a mentoring system to induct new employees, and increase the support networks for staff to cope with change and development is starting. Through Framing the Future, an environment of ongoing adaptation and improvement can be nurtured, which includes, consults, and benefits employers and employees.

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Embracing the Future

Sydney Institute of Technology

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Embracing The Future

Sydney Institute of Technology (SIT) is spread over six campuses. It includes many heritage buildings and even an old gaol. With over 40 000 students and hundreds of staff it is a complex network of disciplines, yet foremost, SIT exists to train students to operate in the real world. Changes in the way knowledge is delivered has meant that students and teachers are beginning to work differently. The implementation of the National Training Framework and delivery and assessment under Training Packages, is impacting on the role of both managers and teachers. In order to support, encourage and lead these grassroot shifts, management has to engage in forward thinking and focus on moving towards the future.

When teaching was all about students sitting in classrooms and learning the set curriculum, the roll book was proof of attendance, dictated funding, and provided all the information necessary to organise and run the course. Heads of Studies managed the course by managing the roll, and their success was rated on the number of enrolments and how many students completed the courses. As methods of teaching change and students have more individualised programs which will often mean they are not physically in class, the roll book is becoming irrelevant. The 'sage on the stage' is becoming the 'guide at the side', so the very nature of education and training is shifting. Education managers at SIT decided to use the Framing the Future project to focus themselves now on what their role could become. Without a roll book, what is the role of the Head of Studies?

As a middle manager herself, Larraine Larri is well aware of the quintessential roles middle managers play. They are instrumental in providing the link between what senior management wants, and what staff do. The vision of a director, and the talent and skills of staff are both ineffectual without the interpretive ability of middle managers. Working in education planning and evaluation at Sydney Institute of Technology, Larraine was able to use her existing skills in Action Learning and Scenario Planning to act as facilitator for the Framing the Future project. She helped the Heads of Studies to devise a plan to allow them to make the most of their talents and formulate ways to make valuable contributions to their departments as the learning environment changes.

Framing the Future provided a forum to establish a dialogue on how the Heads of Studies could manage their changing roles, and to plan what that role could be in the future. Instead of complaining over coffee, people were encouraged to share their perceptions, and Framing the Future provided a safe environment to express opinions. So the structure of Framing the Future provided a sense of freedom.

Being encouraged to think so far ahead also helped managers to consider their future in very broad terms. According to Margaret Davis, Head of Studies for Manufacturing Programs, Framing the Future helped the group to look at the big picture. 'You need to review your strategies to make sure you are achieving what you want.' It also helped the group pinpoint the future variables and what they could mean for conducting the business of education.

> *Consciously focusing on direction helps to prioritise what's important.* Margaret Davis, Head of Studies, Manufacturing Studies

I think we'll become more astute managers because of this whole process. Gerald Mackie, Head of Studies Building and Construction

Since all the participants were at the same level, there was no self-censorship so as to say the right thing in front of more senior management. A sense of trust between the members meant that individuals felt able to say what they thought, and having people from different areas provided a wide range of views and improved teamwork. The group became quite bonded and links between departments were enhanced. Within the project Jim Spinks noticed that while he was very aware of economic factors, members from other departments had a better knowledge of social factors. So it was a good mix.

A lot of other issues came up - a dialogue developed on all sorts of things. Gerald Mackie, Head of Studies Building and Construction

The team organised a number of well known speakers to take part in presentations that were open to the entire Institute. There was considerable interest in the presentations, and subsequently, the project and its topic.

What we learned during the Framing the Future project has become part of our vocabulary and dialogue. What we have learned has become sub-conscious, we've moved to another level of understanding and debate. Beryl Fitzharris, Head of Studies Management

Larraine Larri played a powerful part in providing the direction, and in setting the ground rules for the group which cannot be underestimated.

As facilitator Larraine was terrific at empowerment and ownership, while still being supportive. She was always questioning and provoking thought. Jim Spinks, Head of Studies -Financial, Property and Legal Department

Framing the Future has given the chance for the Heads of Studies at SIT to embrace change as a positive move forward, rather than being administrators with their heads in the sand.

While the future is still uncertain, this process gives us a measure of strategic control over it. Beryl Fitzharris, Head of Studies Management

The Future for Children
TAFE SA Child Studies Program

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The Future For Children

The room is full of children. Two are crying, another is holding her breath, a small boy is throwing building blocks, another is taking off his pants. Did the text books cover this? Industry provides real life situations for childcare trainees, because working in industry is about that - real situations. Many child care specialists have realised that if TAFE and industry can work together, students could access information on new theories, how and why they work, and with the help of industry, put it all together in the work environment. Framing the Future has stepped in to the childcare arena, to allow the people who will be involved in the training, from TAFE and industry, to decide how to work together to provide the best outcome.

> *The days of being able to stick your head in the sand are numbered. TAFEs have to be more responsive to student and industry needs.* Elizabeth Owers, Advanced Skills Lecturer, TAFE SA

Never one to pass up a challenge, Elizabeth Dau signed on to be the facilitator and driving force of the Child Care Services Framing the Future Project which covered all states and territories except Victoria and New South Wales. Acknowledging the huge physical distances between participants, Elizabeth set up the project so that it ran in two day blocks. Everybody got together for two intense days of brainstorming, issue sharing, and problem solving. These forums included as many people as possible to get the most out of brainstorming and sharing of ideas. Several forums also included panels of experts who spoke, and then answered questions on topics such as 'Training needs in the Children's Services Sector'

> *Elizabeth Dau has a huge number of contacts around Australia, and she brings an incredible amount of managerial expertise to the project.* Elizabeth Owers, Advanced Skills Lecturer, TAFE SA

The major focus of Framing the Future for the Child Care Industry was to share and promote ideas and fledgling models of how different Institutes were starting to work more closely with industry to provide more flexible and effective training because of the National Training Framework.

> *One of the best things about involving many campuses was sharing information.* Elizabeth Dau, Project Facilitator

Launceston TAFE was already using competency based training and assessment, so their representative in the project, Anne Dares, was able to explain what the Institute had learnt, and what was working for them in Tasmania. Being involved in Framing the Future provided the impetus for Launceston to share their new model with other Institutes. The project raised awareness within the TAFEs that hadn't given the new changes much thought, so they were more open to hearing how others were dealing with the issues, and were willing to put themselves in the picture, planning for their future.

The opportunity to stop and discuss alternatives for training to the competencies was extremely valuable, especially with a group that included service providers and training providers. Toni Williams, ACT Children's Resource and Advisory Program

Elizabeth encouraged the participants to let themselves go. After the general introduction, smaller groups formed to discuss the issues of training to competencies. Before they started, everyone was told to forget the constraints of cost and current practices and assumptions about training. Being out of the normal work environment also helped people to relax and think more laterally about the big picture.

The blue-sky approach meant we weren't constrained by what happens now. We could look at what would be the best outcome. Helen Lamming, Director, Tuggeranong Community Services, Canberra

Directors of TAFE Child Care Centres and other industry members were included in the project because they will be important players when the new program is in place. By including all the parties at the start of the project, rather than informing them later, what had been decided, commitment and enthusiasm was inspired. Individuals felt they had some ownership of both the issues and the outcomes since they had a role in the planning.

For a long time we've felt the standard of students is not that good because of the absence of industry involvement. We were very keen as an employer to have an input into the training of students who will become our future employees. Helen Lamming, Director, Tuggeranong Community Services, Canberra

Industry links and awareness were improved by bringing trainers and industry leaders together. It improved the sense of teamwork that can get forgotten in hectic schedules. After all, each is dependent on the other.

It's a true industry partnership. I came away feeling like we'd got the ball rolling; and it's still rolling. Helen Lamming, Director, Tuggeranong Community Services, Canberra

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Changes in delivery and assessment have meant that trainers have to change or update their own skills. The forum was an opportunity to find out what skills would be needed, and how to access them. As they understand the relevance of changing their own skill base in the context of industry needs, staff are more inclined to seek out the training because they can see it is relevant. Framing the Future has given staff the information, and the opportunities to make sure they aren't left behind as the industry progresses.

> *Since we've embraced the changes, my job has more variety and challenge. It is more rewarding.* Elizabeth Owers, - Advanced Skills Lecturer, TAFE SA

Teamwork in implementing the National Training Framework is central to its success. Future training will depend on teamwork throughout the learning period. The trainer, the employer, and the learner will all play roles in driving the education process. Instead of one party calling the shots, there will be a partnership, which will draw on a variety of resources, choosing the most appropriate.

> *The opportunity to sit and talk about the issues openly was great. People were willing to discuss what we (the industry) want. This is the most significant impact we've been able to have on training.* Helen Lamming, Director, Tuggeranong Community Services, Canberra

The chance to develop new networks through the work teams and the industry connections has on-going benefits to everyone involved. Especially for people working in isolated areas, this has been a big help by introducing work counterparts at the same level in other offices to discuss issues with, and bounce ideas off.

> *The networking was probably the most useful aspect for me. Talking to TAFE teachers was encouraging, and I have a new sense of faith for future collaborative efforts.* Maudi Joyce - Training Coordinator, DETE

The effects of this Framing the Future project will be long lasting for those involved. On-going groups have been formed to continue work towards putting the competencies in place by the middle of 1999 at the local level, and a staff development kit has been developed to ensure others can access information about the changes. The teamwork and support has helped TAFE Child-Care embrace the coming changes as a positive experience.

> *The Framing the Future project is the most valuable thing I've done all year.* Helen Lamming, Director, Tuggeranong Community Services, Canberra

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Seeing Food Afresh

Victorian Food Industry Training Board

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Seeing Food Afresh

The old bloke owns the boat, and his two sons and he go out fishing every morning while the rest of the country sleeps. When they get back, they stick the catch in crates, and a local transport company sends a truck to pick up all the crates. The truck delivers them to a market where wholesalers buy the fish before selling them on to retailers. The retailer can be a corner fish and chip shop. The customer may well be you.

The Victorian Food Industry Training Board (VFITB) plays an on-going role to make sure the public can have faith that all the food they buy is safe and of good quality. When members of the seafood industry began to show interest in introducing more training in their industry, Cheryl Downie, the Executive Officer of VFITB leapt into action. After consulting people from the industry, Cheryl put together a proposal, approached Framing the Future, and obtained funding and support to help industry representatives to work out how to make hopes of training into practical realities. The aim was to work out how to implement training in the seafood industry where it had never been formalised, with government, industry bodies, training providers and the companies who make a living by supplying and handling seafood, working together to frame their future.

The Framing the Future project was able to dive straight into the seafood industry to help define and implement the training needs of the people who handle seafood. Using the existing project group of the Geelong Seafood Taskforce, Jennifer Gilbert, the facilitator from VFITB was able to address the issue of training immediately without needing to build a project team from scratch. Together the participants set out to investigate how they could get the best value out of training in light of the coming Seafood Training Package.

> *It's something that's got to improve across the industry.* Tas Warn, FWD Abalone

When this Framing the Future project was devised its primary objective was to introduce and implement the Training Package for the seafood industry. But a delay with the Package meant that the project had to change direction. Cheryl Downie, who was the initiating force of the project was enthusiastic about what could be achieved even if the full Package wasn't available yet. The project got the participants thinking how they could be pro-active to be in the best position for when the Training Package is introduced.

> *We can already offer the core elements.* John Van Cleef, Gordon Institute of TAFE.

The project team worked together on how to address the training issues specific to their industry. With the help of Jennifer, smaller subsets were also able to discuss how to deal with issues and access information that only affected a small number of companies such as the abalone harvesters.

As part of Framing the Future, Jennifer also visited small businesses individually, to help them focus on how their employees might benefit from training. Having someone to go out to individual businesses and discuss training options has helped managers and owners become more aware of

what is already accessible, even though it may not be specifically aimed at the seafood industry. Jennifer encouraged managers and owners to look at training as a positive step to improve their business, rather than a time-wasting demand of an interfering bureaucracy. The flexibility of Framing the Future meant that different approaches could be used even within the same project.

> *We will be involving our employees in more training - and not just what's compulsory. It becomes part of a natural progression to provide training as the industry moves ahead.* Tas Warn, FWD Abalone

Building a sense of the partnership has helped the participants realise how they can immediately provide a better service to their customers within the industry, and therefore help their own business. John Van Cleef, from Gordon Institute of TAFE was prompted into action when he saw how the training needs of many companies were not being met by the existing TAFE system. He has appointed a new coordinator to help small companies in the seafood industry to tailor training to suit their needs. This means a better service, which will attract more students, which is good for the industry as well as TAFE.

> *It provided the chance to expand our profile with the seafood industry, and our business.* John Van Cleef, Gordon Institute of TAFE.

Until now there have been very few opportunities for the different arms of the industry to meet. While there had been an awareness that groups were inter-dependant, physically sitting around a table together gave people a chance to make connections, discuss issues and form real partnerships.

> *Framing the Future gave us the preparation to establish and maintain the partnership between industry bodies, the training providers and the industry members.* Cheryl Downie, Victorian Food Industry Training Board

The important thing with group work is to bring everyone along. Framing the Future bases progress on the group's teamwork. The pace must be set by the members of the group because the nature of the industry is so inter-dependent. It doesn't matter how good the retailer is if the fish are left waiting on the wharf in the heat all day. This means that no-one is left out, and those who have already taken steps forward on the issue of training feel affirmed that they are on the right track.

Since the Seafood Project, Cheryl Downie and Jennifer Gilbert have started work on a project with the baking industry. This one is quite different. The aim is to have a training system that is far more flexible, and better suited to serving the needs of a thriving industry. As the industry takes on more trainees and apprentices, their training needs have out-grown old structures.

Industry training has been mainly limited to traditional approaches. This has been a chance to get the issues for change out into the open. Graham Dodgshun, Bakery Owner

Although this project is still going, there are already promising signs of a growing understanding of the needs of the baking industry within the TAFE system.

It's opening up the windows and doors in people's minds. There is growing awareness of a whole range of options and possibilities.
Graham Dodgshun, Bakery Owner

The participants have felt that the human side of the project has worked in its favour. People like to discuss issues with other people rather than receive brochures telling them about decisions that have already been made. With many small businesses in the industry, involving as many individuals as possible in the project has already been effective in involving people in the changes.

Involving people facilitates the trickle down effect throughout the industry. Graham Dodgshun, Bakery Owner

Framing the Future provided the right environment for the VFITB to encourage and support the Seafood Industry and the Baking Industry. Teamwork and learning by participation has formed partnerships to introduce or radically update training and formal qualification structures to industries that mean far more to the Australian economy than just another meal.

people

Sowing the Seeds for the Future

The University of Ballarat SMB TAFE Campus

places

projects

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Sowing The Seeds For The Future

The University of Ballarat SMB TAFE Campus, formerly, The School of Mines & Industries Ballarat, Limited has been training apprentices for over a century. Builders, plumbers, chefs and farmers have all started their careers here. There have always been close ties with industry. Courses were delivered with students attending the set classes, and later sitting for assessment. But the changing times meant industry demanded greater flexibility and responsiveness from the Institute. So SMB had to move its focus to the way it provides apprentices with the skills they need to get a job, rather than teaching students everything in the course outline. But it is not easy to let go of old habits; something had to give, and the farmers in the Rural Studies Department were getting restless.

> *Belief in change and belief in the capacity to change was our first, and probably our most major obstacle.* John Taylor, Rural Studies Department

John Taylor is a teacher in the Agriculture Studies area and he noticed increasing pressure for change from the agricultural industry. John also knew that the Agricultural Training Package was nearing completion. His department was already trying to think of more realistic ways to work with industry when SMB had the chance to participate in a Framing the Future Project. Three departments, Rural Studies, Hospitality Studies and Building Studies signed up. Staff saw this as a chance to drive how their departments would provide the best possible training in a changing environment; where different students have different needs and industry is an active partner in the learning process.

As the person responsible for staff development at SMB, Jeanette John accepted the role of project facilitator. Lorraine Lawrence was the project adviser. Together, they set the ball in motion by gathering information on all the available resources. Although teachers often know what information would be useful, they face time constraints that typically make it difficult for them to start a search. Having easy access to all the available resources meant that it was possible to see where existing resources could be manipulated, and where innovation was necessary.

> *At the teaching level we don't normally get the chance to make the contacts to develop future programming.* John Taylor - Rural Studies Department

The motivation for working within the Framing the Future structure was that it offered a hands-on, practical way of considering the best direction to move in, defined the ultimate goal, how to get there, and what tools to use (or to create), and established a benchmark to quantify success. The thing that got people involved was they were working with their peers, rather than being told what to do from above.

> *From the start, it tied everyone together as a team.* John Gay Building Studies Department

To provide an individualised service to students, teachers and trainers had to expand their view of their own role. Teachers had to throw out the idea of a structured course delivery. Now the gauge of success is how well students were prepared for their chosen industry at the culmination of the course.

> *We all certainly benefited from it. The Framing the Future structure and guidelines made handling the necessary changes more straightforward.* Derek Wren, Hospitality Studies

Teamwork was strengthened, as peers had to rely on each other, because no one had all the answers themselves. While previously there had been some rivalry between departments, it turned out, that sometimes the best resource in getting around a problem was someone in the next department who was also working on the Framing the Future Project. This cross fertilisation meant enthusiasm was easier to maintain. When one team felt they had hit a wall, a meeting with the other teams provided fresh encouragement and ideas.

> *No matter how smart you are, you don't have all the answers in your own head, so there's nothing like sitting down with a group of like-minded people and working out options together* John Taylor, Rural Studies Department

A Training Plan was initially set up in the Rural Studies Department. It ensured that after students received initial assessment there would be appropriate training, perhaps a composite of classroom activities and on-the-job training. Teaching staff then re-assessed the students to ensure all the gaps in knowledge and skill had been filled. Since the Building Studies Department and the Hospitality Studies Departments experience many of the same challenges in terms of needing to assess students in real work conditions as well as dealing with seasonal factors, they were also able to use a modified Training Plan.

> *Everybody's there for the same reason. And when the project gets a good result it really builds your confidence* John Gay Building Studies Department

Having an active support network was crucial to keeping the project on track. When Jeanette John and Lorraine Lawrence realised that one department couldn't complete research properly because they didn't have a computer terminal with Internet access, they were instrumental in getting that remedied. Training was then provided to allow everyone in the department to develop the skills necessary to access the Web.

> *It was a support thing more than anything else.* John Taylor, Rural Studies Department

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As part of Framing the Future project, several staff attended a workshop called 'Develop Assessment Tools'. This is the basis for assessment against competencies under the Training Packages. It is essential to make sure that TAFE and teachers are using the most up-to-date methods of assessment, by assessing up-front and then designing a training program to show how the student should be managed through their learning process.

> *The project brings out your confidence because you're playing a role that's got real value.* John Gay, Building Studies Department

Increased flexibility at SMB means students in the Rural Studies Department are now able to enrol at any time of the year. This suits industries because learning should be available when it's needed. To ensure that flexibility of enrolment is possible, the Student and Administrative Services Department had to be convinced that it was necessary for the survival of the course. Since it is impossible to operate in a vacuum, the teamwork function had to be extended far beyond the initial group to enlist assistance from other areas of the institution.

All three teams agreed that motivated individuals within the team can really make a difference, and that the support role of the facilitator is very important.

> *Jeanette John drove the project (at SMB). She provided the direction and support and made sure we met the challenges we had set for ourselves. But we still did it ourselves.* John Taylor, Rural Studies Department

The SMB Departments involved with Framing the Future have made huge leaps of faith. They have found new focus, implemented a radical new role for SMB and provided growth opportunities for their staff. They are now well placed to face the future.